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ABSTRACT

This paper opened a workshop session designed to demonstrate a group training process using the collegial modeling process. This process was developed within the faculty of a small high school serving a correctional facility. The program described was developed to allow teachers the option to model specific behaviors to both their colleagues and students. A description is given of the brief, bi-weekly instructional meetings held for the entire faculty in which information on the day's focus and activities is dispensed, stress is lessened, training in specific behaviors is given, and faculty input is solicited. The benefits from this kind of collegiality are listed. (JD)

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COLLEGIAL MODELING IN A SCHOOL SETTING

A workshop presented at the National Council

of States on Inservice Education

November 1988

by

Glen Harper, Ph.D.

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MODELING

Early in the Twentieth Century societal reform was impacted by the deterministic psychology of Thorndike, Hull, Skinner, and others (Gagne, 1970). Stimulus-Response (S-R) was the theory that if we controlled the enviroment we could control the individual. The whole emphasis was to control, contain and restructure the world outside the individual and thus have an impact on the inner being.

In mid-century, Bandura, Miller, Dollard, Decker and others challenged the S-R concept and began testing its underlying theory in different settings (Hergenhahn 1982: 327-329). Weinstein and Mayer (1986) gave the best summation of the "new" (Plato and Aristotle used the model concept to instill qualities in students long before the behavorialists proposed their theories, which changes the meaning of 'new'.) approach to learning. They said:

> The behaviorist (or S-R) approach to learning...focuses on how presentation of material influences behavior...this S-R approach is based on the idea that a 'stimulus goes in, a response comes out, and what happens in between is summarized by a hyphen.' In contrast, the cognitive approach to learning seeks to understand how incoming information is processed and

structured in memory...' instead of a hyphen, we have mental structures and processes.'

It is this cognitive approach to the conscious or unconscious choosing of behavior that permits teachers and schools to function when all factors cannot be controlled. If we choose to have better schools, we begin with the faculty and not necessarily the environment. Briefly, modeling is operational when:

> ....people have the power to take in a very complex set of cues, simplify them for acceptance, and then develop a unique set of behaviors based on the observed cues. The key elements of attention, mental coding, mental rehearsal, and motivation were specifically identified as controllable behaviors. Decker (1983)

Simplified, the process is described as:

> ....people pay attention to a model, take in the model's cues, simplify them through the use of symbols, place them in a memory bank of symbols. Then they mentally play back the behavior with themselves in the starring role. They now 'own' the behavior. When they recall at a later time, the actions are replayed in reality (Harper and Shute, 1986).

Thus we see that if we want teachers to learn and teach students who must learn, the best way to get the point

across is to model the behavior that we desire to be learned. This learning must be demonstrated both in and out of the classroom. The program described below is designed to allow teachers the option to model specific behaviors to both their colleagues and students.

TEACHING TO LEARN

It is the thought of some instuctional leaders that we learn best by teaching. Quoting two ancients (Comenius and Bell, respectively), Shute (1988) suggests the clearest view of this concept.

> The saying, "He who teaches others, teaches himself," is very true, not only because constant repetition impresses a fact indelibly on the mind, but because the process of teaching in itself gives a deeper insight into the subject taught... If a student wished to make progress, he should arrange to give lessons daily in the subjects he was studying, even if he had to hire his pupils.
>
> That the teacher profits far more by teaching than the scholar does by learning, is a maxim of antiquity, which all experience confirms - "docemur docendo" - He who teaches learns.

If we accept the idea that we must teach to thoughly learn, then when we purchase packaged inservice programs, or hire 'experts' to train our staff, we are paying for a

lesser product than is readily available. To train our staff, we need only institute the power of collegial learning. This collegial learning is best described by the entire issue of Educational Leadership in November 1987 (Brandt 1987). Whether we call it cooperative, collegial, collaborative, or coaching, it is the method of educators teaching educators within the school setting.

Goodlad was correct when he suggested that school improvement must start in each classroom and proceed on a school by school basis if lasting and important changes are to occur (Goodlad 1984). At C. O. Bastian High School (COB), we have begun a collegial modeling program which accentuates the concepts heretofore presented. It is briefly described below.

SCHOOL FACULTY DEMOGRAPHICS

Our school faculty is best described in the different areas.

Age: 24 - 56 Range
Years Teaching Experience: 0 - 21 Range
Ethninticity: Caucasian 17, Native American 1.
Teacher training institutions represented, 10.
Sex: 8 male 9 female.
Number with first teaching assignment at COB: 10.
Subjects taught: 18
Special circumstances: COB was an all girl juvenile correctional facility until July 1988, when it became coed.

Teachers are hired through the Lincoln County School District and receive all of the benefits of regular teachers. Because of the rural remoteness of the site, teachers generally are difficult to recruit, but have excellent retention, once hired.

COLLEGIAL MODELING IN A SMALL SCHOOL:

Each morning COB's faculty meets for 15 minutes prior to the students being allowed into the building. During that time information is dispensed, stress is lessened, training is given, and/or faculty input is solicited. All of the faculty including the custodian and secretary are present. Once each semester, a subject is selected either by the principal, or the staff and materials are prepared to be given as assignments. Teachers respond twice a week to the assigned area with a prepared presentation of not more than ten minutes. Teachers are then requested to try the new approach with their class or specific students and report back voluntarily within a two day period. All persons are requested to participate, however the secretary and custodian usually choose exclusion.

Several suggestions are offered to create a learning atmosphere and promote teacher modeling during the collegial training process. First, keep all lessons to ten minutes. We assume that all persons have familiarity with the teaching processes being discussed and therefore the lesson is a reminder of what was previously learned. Second, only

hold instructional meetings two times a week, not every day. This allows the teachers to focus on one item for a two to three day period. A master calendar should be created at this time. (However, we have found that specific dates are not as helpful as a simple sequence.) Third, ask teachers to look for ways the techniques are now in use and also for ways to improve. We find that this is an excellent way for each teacher to compliment the entire faculty on present techniques and to highlight what we are truely modeling to the students. Fourth, Have each teacher identify ways to incorporate the lesson in the classroom that day, while the idea is fresh. Usually the teacher who teaches is the greatest benefactor (Remember docemer docendo.), but others have shown great improvement because of explicit modeling which has taken place. Fifth, the subject must be in a comfortable area at first. The biggest obstacle appeared to be low self image in the teachers, but as the process developed, the confidence increased and even aides or non-trained vocational teachers became model teachers. Sixth, only make brief assignment and allow the individual teacher's educational personality to blossom. But remember to keep the door open for consultation prior to the day of presentation. And last, include every faculty member. We find that each has a certain strength to present or provides an insight not previously considered.

The specific benefits that have resulted from the program are:

1. Positive compliments for all faculty.
2. A learning atmosphere is created among all teachers.
3. Teachers are teaching teachers.
4. Teachers must examine classroom techniques for a 9+ week period. The extended evaluation period assists the learning environment more than a one shot seminar.
5. Increased awareness of how students feel.
6. Reduced training costs which may be rechanneled into faculty needs.
7. We establish ourselves as equals and the administration is accepted in the division of labor.
8. Professional skills are shared with paraprofessionals.
9. The academic conservation increases creating a center of learning for teachers and students alike.
10. David Letterman always has ten in a list.

At this point participants are walked through a group training process using the collegial modeling process.

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IDEAS FOR FACULTY REPORTS

1. DISCIPLINE
2. MOTIVATION
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4. TEACHING TECHNIQUES
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